



biblioteca
valutazione

LEARNING DEPARTMENT,
EVALUATION

Project

Born to read



GOAL

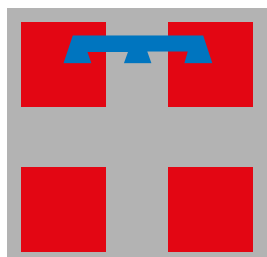


Culture.

MISSION

Developing skills

LEAD ORGANIZATION / MAIN PARTNER(S)



REGIONE
PIEMONTE

KEY PRIORITY

Raise awareness among families about the importance of reading aloud to preschool-aged children (ages 0–6)

DESCRIPTION
OF THE INITIATIVE

“Born to read - Piedmont” (so on also NpL) is the regional implementation of the national “Born to read” program, aimed at children ages 0–6. It has been promoted and coordinated by the Piedmont Region since 2001 and supported by Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo since 2004. Building on the national program, additional activities have been developed through the coordinated efforts of multiple stakeholders, including libraries, pediatricians, schools and childcare centers, nonprofit organizations, and bookstores. The proposed activities are designed to help children and their parents develop a habit of reading during the first six years of life, with specific activities tailored to different age groups.

DURATION

2001 (supported by Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo since 2004)

TERRITORY OF
OPERATION

Piedmont

GRANTS
FROM FCSP

Over 18 years (2004–2021), Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo provided annual grants totaling nearly €6 million

ORGANIZATION

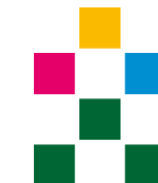
Promoted and coordinated by the Piedmont Region and supported by Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo

KEY FIGURES*
(update through 2021)

408 Municipalities

229 Pediatricians

**over
1.000** Kindergardens



SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION

Fondazione Ing. Rodolfo Debenedetti

Giovanni Abbiati, Paola Monti e Paolo Pinotti

EVALUATION PERIOD

October 2019 - 2022



OBJECTIVE

-  Informed Design (*Foresight*)
-  Ongoing Improvement (*Improvement*)
-  Performance Evaluation (*improvement*)

-  Transparency (*accountability*)
-  Experimentation and innovation (*learning*)
-  Knowledge and scientific research (*advocacy*)

METHODOLOGY

-  Counterfactual impact evaluation
-  Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)
-  SROI or other non-counterfactual impact estimate
-  Customer satisfaction
-  Qualitative survey of beneficiaries
-  Implementation analysis
-  Monitoring data analysis
-  Pre- and post-intervantion monitoring

Other: (specify)

SAMPLES AND DATA COLLECTION

Family survey: 1,761 questionnaires, 144 school sites, April–June 2021.
Administrative data: over 170,000 INVALSI tests, 2010–2019.

COGNITIVE QUESTIONS

- 1 Was NpL actually effective in promoting the daily habit of reading aloud at home?
- 2 What impact has NpL had on the Italian language and mathematics skills of students in the 2nd and 5th grades of primary school? Has it helped promote inclusion and reduce inequalities?
- 3 How has NpL’s local network developed, and which implementation features enable or hinder its effectiveness?



Evaluation of NpL Piedmont



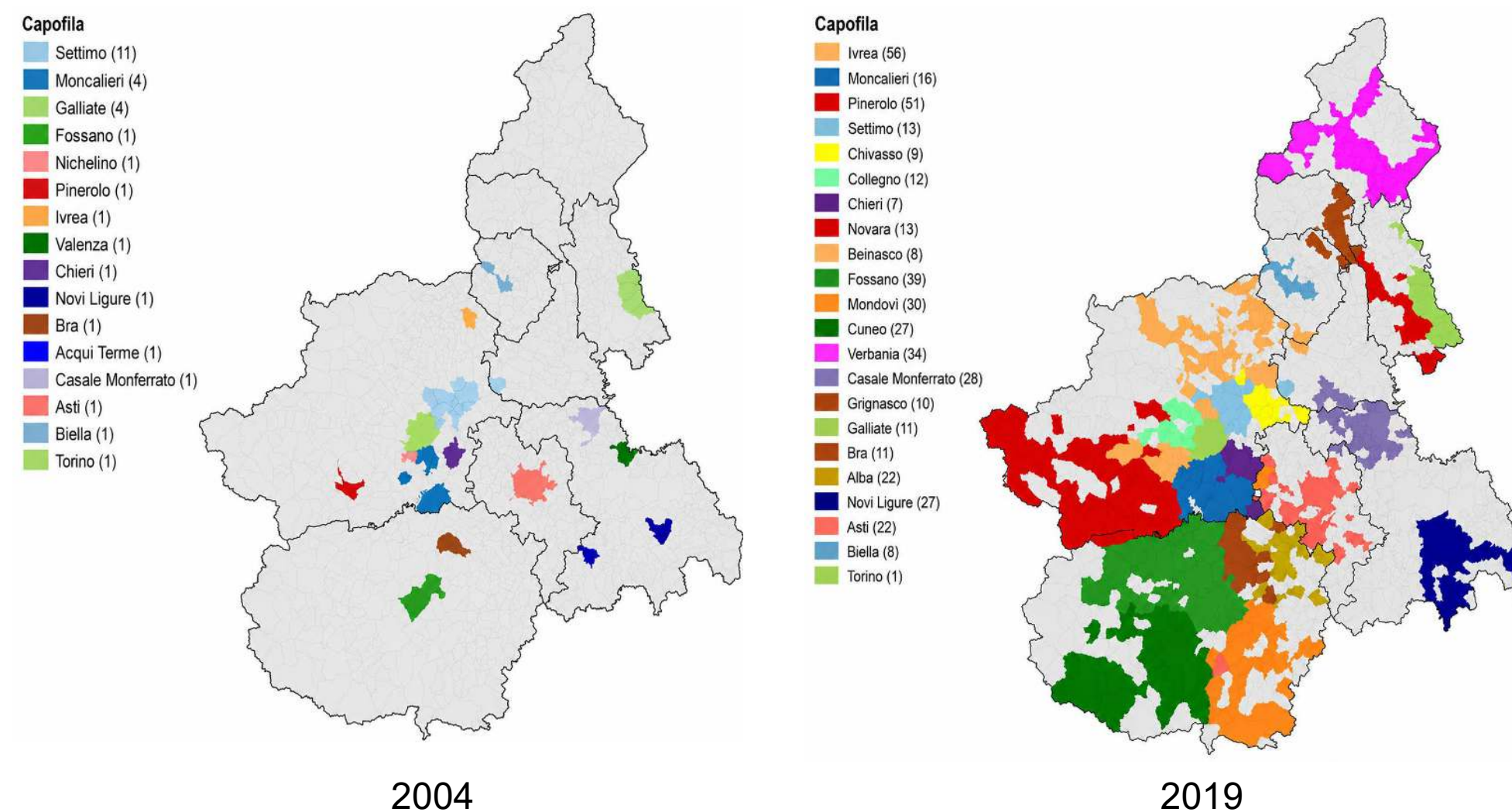
METHODOLOGY

Mapping of nearly 1,400 partners within the NpL network that contribute to the implementation of activities across the region. Each organization was asked to complete the “NpL Operating bodies Questionnaire” to collect qualitative information on activities implemented at the local level.

MAIN FINDINGS

- Local partnerships vary considerably in their characteristics, with library systems playing a central role and, in some cases, significant involvement from the healthcare sector.
- The project appears to have fostered new forms of collaboration among the library, education, and healthcare sectors.
- The project is widely recognized for its ability to reach many families.
- Challenges remain in reaching families from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and those with limited reading habits.

Fig. 1 NpL Piedmont network in year 2004 and 2019





Impact evaluation: methodology



METHODOLOGY

The impact evaluation is based on a comparison between pupils who potentially participated in NpL, based on their year and place of birth, and students who did not have this opportunity.

Outcome of interest

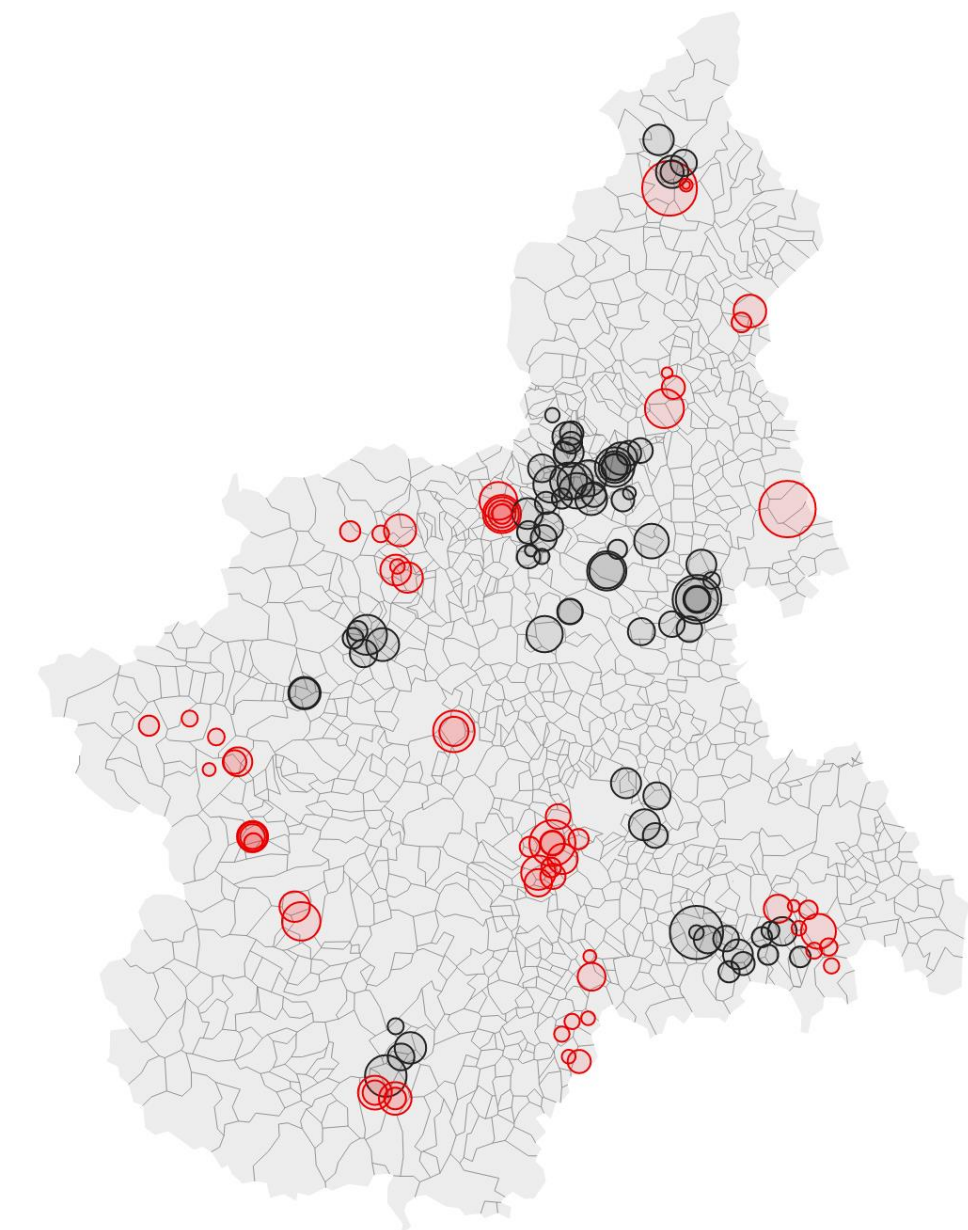
- Reading habits, time spent on other activities, and other indicators related to family relationships, measured through a questionnaire administered to parents of 2nd- and 5th-grade pupils during the 2020/2021 school year;
- Cognitive skills in Italian language and mathematics, measured through standardized INVALSI tests administered in grade 2 and 5, between 2010 and 2019

QUESTIONNAIRE

- With the multilingual questionnaire researchers investigated primary school children's reading habits and screen use, exploring the potential relationship between early reading and the use of new technologies, as well as parents' awareness of NpL.
- The survey was conducted online between April and June 2021. It involved families living in municipalities participating in NpL ("treatment group") and municipalities not participating in the program ("control group"). A total of 1,761 questionnaires were collected across 144 school sites, with a response rate of 35%.
- Two-stage sampling with propensity score matching across 26 matched pairs of municipalities.
- Data were collected and analyzed anonymously.

Fig. 2 Map of "treated" and "control" NpL municipalities

■ Control ■ Treated



Created with Datawrapper



Key results of the impact evaluation (1/2)



SURVEY

1. Reading at home

Participation in NpL increases the frequency with which parents read aloud to their children between the ages of 2 and 6, with the largest effect among children ages 4–5 (+6 percentage points).

2. Enjoyment and frequency of reading

Children exposed to NpL are 19 percentage points more likely to enjoy reading and are also more likely to list reading among their favorite activities.

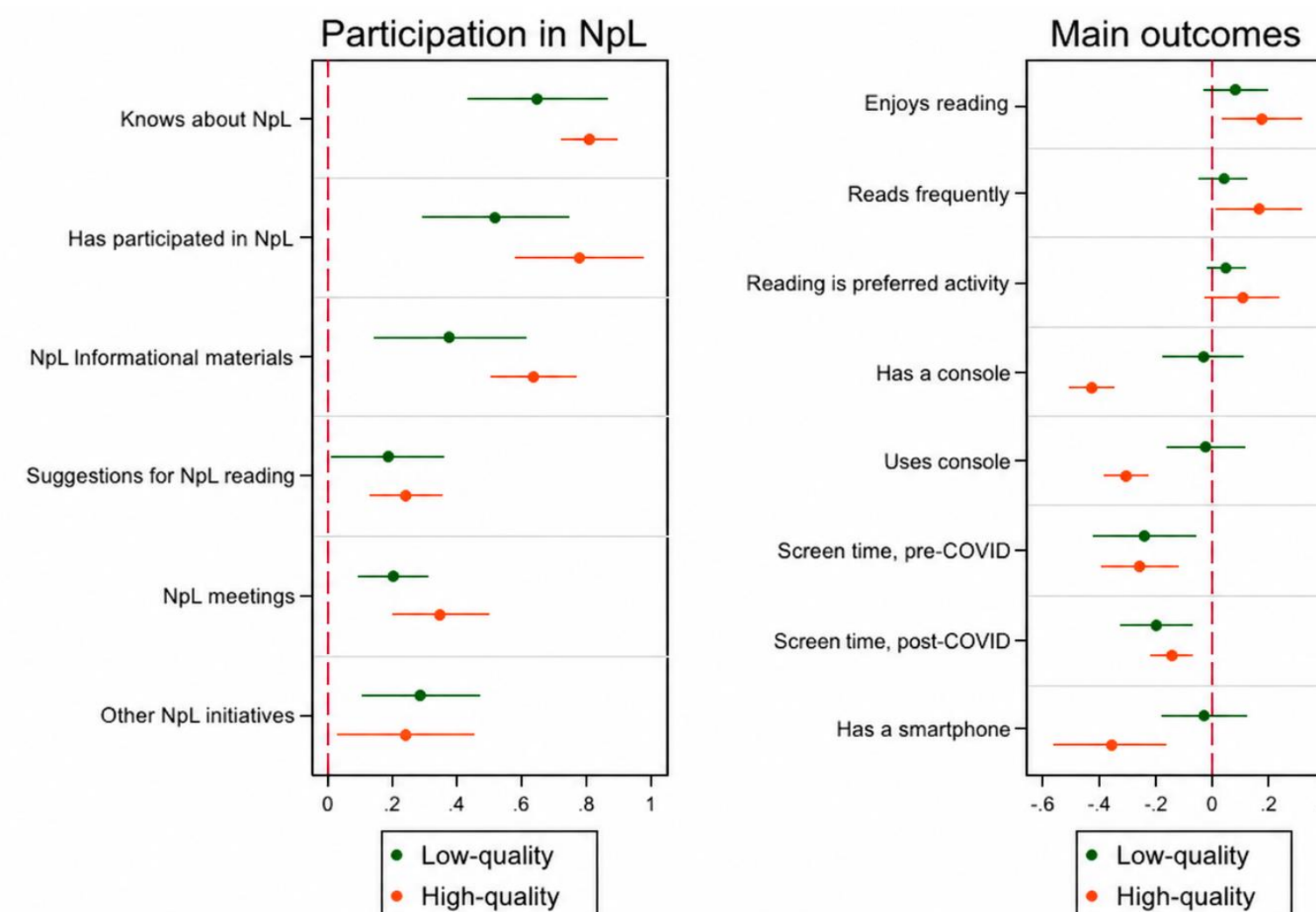
3. Reduced screen use

NpL significantly reduces the amount of time children spend playing video games and using computers, as well as the likelihood of owning a smartphone.

4. Library

NpL increases the likelihood that parents visit the library with their children. No significant effects were found, however, on parent-child relationships.

Fig. 3 Participation and effects of NpL, by the quality of local projects

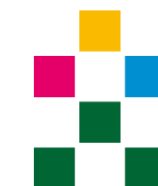


Project quality matters: many of the observed effects of NpL are driven by local projects that received higher scores for the quality of their project proposals during the funding application evaluation process.

Notable differences emerge in **frequent parent-child reading**, which increases by **16%** in high-quality projects versus **4%** in standard-quality projects, and **console ownership**, whose likelihood decreases by **3%** in standard-quality projects versus **42%** in high-quality projects.



Key results of the impact evaluation (2/2)



INVALSI DATA

1. Italian language test

Boys, pupils from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, first-generation migrants show significant improvements in Italian language test scores following (potential) participation in NpL.

2. Reduction in learning gaps

The learning gap between pupils from more and less socioeconomically advantaged families decreases from 24% to 21%, while the gap between Italian students and students with a migrant background decreases by as much as 10 percentage points, from 35% to 25%.

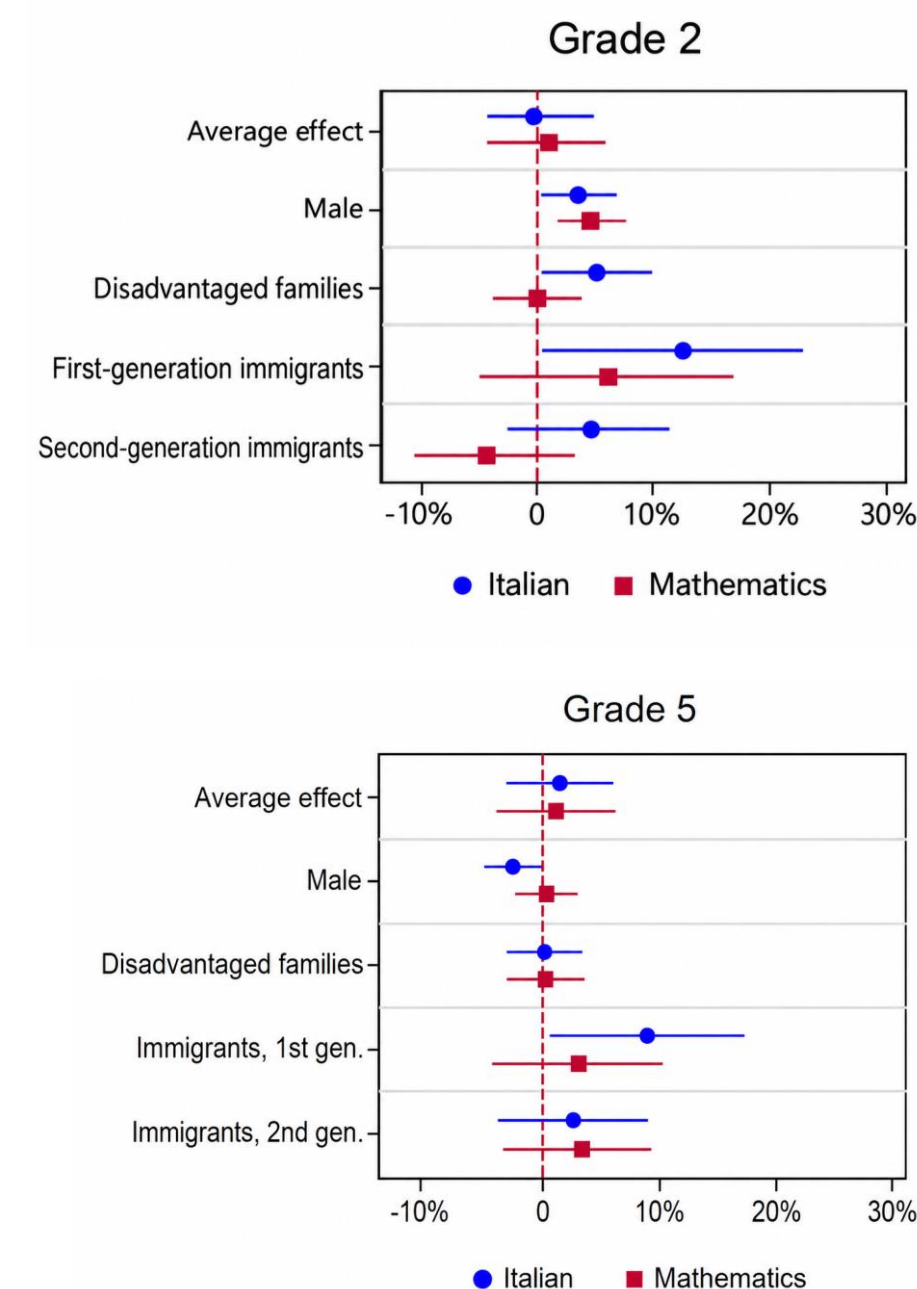
3. Long-term and continuous exposure to NpL

The effects described above emerge only after long-term and continuous exposure to NpL activities for at least 5–6 years. No significant effects are found for cohorts exposed to the program for shorter periods.

4. Pupils with migrant backgrounds

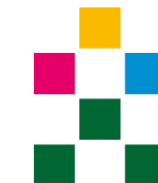
For first-generation migrant pupils, the estimated effect is significant both in 2nd and 5th grade.

Fig. 4 Impact of NpL on Italian and Math INVALSI test scores





Policy Implications



A successful Program

- NpL stands out as a successful reading promotion program for younger generations, including in the international context.

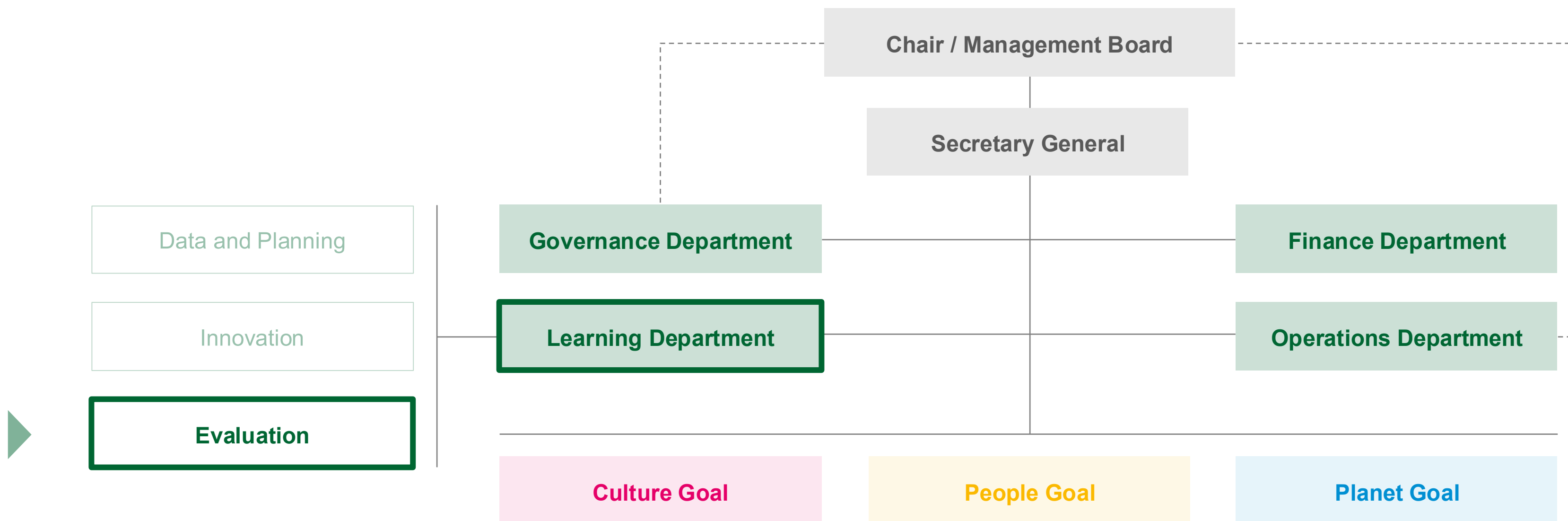
Long-term Continuity

- Short-term projects have limited effects. Extending activities beyond the 0–6 age range—potentially through different approaches—could help ensure that the effects on academic achievement are sustained over time.

Pupils with migrant backgrounds or from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds

- Pupils with migrant backgrounds or from socioeconomically disadvantaged families benefit the most from participation in NpL, contributing to a reduction in learning disparities. It would therefore be recommended to prioritize these groups when targeting program activities.
-

STRUCTURE

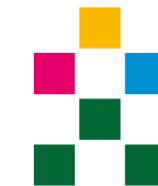
LEARNING DEPARTMENT
EVALUATION

Evaluation manages the **ex-post** evaluation of FCSP's main projects, to gain an understanding of the relevant processes, effects and impacts, in such a way as to support the re-design of initiatives, rectify any shortcomings and emphasise success stories.

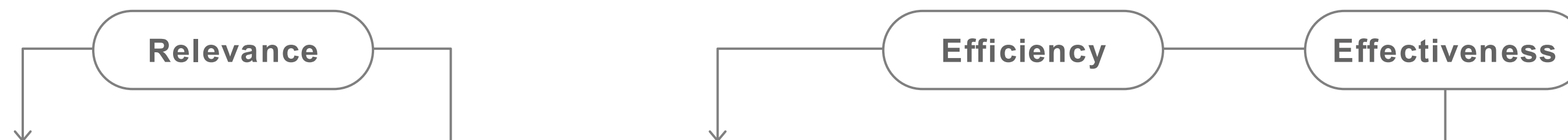
It also conducts **ex-ante** evaluations and needs assessments to support the design of new projects, particularly those with high-impact, promoting the use of rigorous and innovative methodologies.



Evaluation Criteria, Evaluation Phases, and Knowledge Needs



EVALUATION CRITERIA



EVALUATION PHASES



KNOWLEDGE NEED

What are the **needs** of the territory / / target groups?

What **objectives** does the intervention aim to achieve?

Which **implementation strategies** should be adopted?

Is there **consistency** between the objectives and the means to achieve them?

Is the theory of change **working** as expected?

Can **the processes** be improved?

How many **subjects** have been **involved** in the initiative? What types of stakeholders are they?

Was the intervention effective? What **impact** did it have?

What **policy implications** can be drawn for future similar interventions?



Evaluation for the benefit of the community



Data and evaluation findings are valuable when they are made available to the community.

Full reports and datasets may be shared with researchers and institutions, subject to case-by-case assessment based on the specific context and intended purpose, to ensure their informed and responsible use.

To access the full reports

Write to valutazione@compagniadisanpaolo.it





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